

Hi all -

You can imagine I spent much of yesterday upset, stressed out, confused, etc. - it sounds like many of you did too.

You all already know that MAGFest is not just one person. I said this [in my original letter](#), but MAGFest will continue to exist, regardless of what the specific makeup of employees or volunteers may be. That being said, the 4 folks who were banned/fired yesterday are not only important to the work, but are great humans. Regardless of your personal relationships with any of them, there is no denying that Deb, Josiah, Shir, and Ian all love MAGFest *and* consistently put in a ton of work on our events and community.

I'm not going to speak at length re: Debra because there's not much I can say that hasn't already been said - her firing is a gross abuse of power towards a person who is not only honest, frank, hardworking, and talented, but who also guided the event and community during a time of change and transition. We were and continue to be better because Deb is a part of MAGFest.

To be transparent, I met with PB on 11/17 to discuss the three staffers who were ultimately banned. These discussions were put on hold by the release of information by FoM. My notes below are not exhaustive or conclusive (those of you active in the channel have likely read about these issues extensively), they just haven't been shared before and I hope they shed some light?

Josiah:

- Before the case mentioned elsewhere was shared with Safe, PB reached out to a Safe Committee member without sharing that with the rest of the committee or to the employees who also serve on committee. While I trust this staffer completely, the case was not yet shared with Safe or STOPS (this was done before I was made aware at all), so to disclose anything about the case, even a hypothetical, to one individual before it was shared with the appropriate (authority/authorities) is, while not explicitly "against the rules", is certainly not standard procedure and not especially fair to any party.

Shir:

- Everyone knows by now that Shir broke NDA. I get it - breaking an NDA is fucked up. However, if an NDA prevents you from doing *the right thing*, it was wrong to have the NDA in the first place. What Shir did was warn their colleague about unfair treatment coming their way.

Ian:

- This one is a bit wild to me. PB shared screenshots with me of a private DM between Ian and another staffer. These DMs included information that Ian presumably should not have known as it was protected by Shir's NDA. However, Ian is not and never has been under an NDA with MAGFest. Ian had a private conversation with another staffer. We've

all certainly DM-ed our fair share of gossip, and while it's not a reality I love, I am not naive about it. To be honest, besides some possibly-unkind off-the-cuff comments, I didn't see anything in the screenshots shown to me that was fireable. A slap on the wrist, maybe. A reminder of the Core Values and a reminder to "Choose Your Words Lovingly?" 100%. But nothing that warranted a ban from staffing.

In mid-November, I told PB that, while I thought disciplinary actions seemed fair and acceptable for Shir and Josiah because of the NDAs (though I never suggested anything on the level of an outright ban or suspension), they did not for Ian.

Josiah, Shir, and Ian were all banned "due to a violation of the Code of Conduct." The CoC was not linked for reference in any of the emails, and the three staffers were not told (in their ban notifications, at least) what part of the CoC they violated or why they were specifically banned. While I realize those specifics would not be public knowledge, it is both professional and just to inform a person as to the reason(s) they are banned (so far as it does not endanger another individual or reveal a reporter's identity).

It was surprising to me that PB issued bans to these staffers without consulting STOPS. I have since heard that was because it was assumed that I would be biased. I can understand that. I have worked really closely with Josiah for 15 months: I value his hard work, dedication to the staffing community, and love for MAGFest. I honestly cannot currently envision the work we do without him. I genuinely ask for your patience with me as I try to navigate the work alone for now until we can figure out next steps.

However, even if it was assumed I would be biased, it still seems to me that it would be common courtesy to inform me that, as the current head of STOPS, these matters would be taken out of my hands and addressed by the ED or BoD. While I would have been surprised to hear this decision and would have likely objected, I still feel that I should have been informed.

Unfortunately, I do feel that this really undermines any authority I have, and I said as much to PB yesterday in our group meeting. Earlier this year, I worked to draft the [Reporting Guidelines](#) and ran them by the employees and the BoD for edits and feedback. If those guidelines are not accurate, and my work re: staffing issues is able to be superseded by the ED or the BoD without notice, it would have been good to know that when I was hired, or included in any of the 3 updated job descriptions I have signed since August 2019.

**Disagreement and dissent are not inherently disrespectful. We're dealing with folks who believe that it is.** If you read my statement last month, you know I've already been accused of being insubordinate. This might be another example of such insubordination, but considering how quickly my colleagues were silenced yesterday, I felt it important to share this with you all today.